

in the last 2½ years. The facts say otherwise. We cut congressional committee staffs by one-third, passed term limits for the Speaker of the House and committee chairmen, opened congressional hearings to the public, forced Congress to get a three-fifths vote before hiking taxes, and made it live by the laws it passes. And that was all done on just the first day of the 104th Congress.

Shortly thereafter, we cut congressional spending by 10 percent, banned lobbyists from giving gifts to Members of Congress, and rescinded more than \$9 billion in 1995 spending agreed to under the old majority.

Critics say that Government spending has not changed since 1995. The fact is that in the 7 years before the GOP Congress, Government spending grew by an average of 5.3 percent per year. In the last 2 years, however, spending has grown by an average of only 3.1 percent. In the 20 years before a GOP majority, Congress spent an average of \$1.21 for every dollar it took in. Today that number is \$1.01.

The critics have been especially rough on our balanced budget agreement, saying that it does too little to entitlement programs and assumes a future of tall clover, balancing the budget with rosy economic forecasts. The fact is that Government spending slows the rate of growth of entitlement spending by over \$400 billion over the next 10 years. Rather than relying on pie-in-the-sky economics, the agreement actually assumes that the economy, which has been growing at an average of 2.7 percent in the last 5 years, will actually slow down and grow by only 2.1 percent over the next 5 years.

The critics say that we have gotten off track in our plan to balance the budget. Once again, they were wrong. In our 7-year balanced budget plan, we estimated that we would collect about \$1.43 trillion in revenue in 1996 and \$1.45 trillion in 1997. Similarly, we projected spending \$1.59 trillion in 1996 and \$1.62 trillion in 1997. Because of the strong economy, however, we have actually taken in \$149 billion more than we expected. And the sweeter news is that in the last 2 years we have actually spent \$48 billion less than our projections.

To put it another way, for 2 years Congress has had \$149 billion more to spend than it planned. But unlike previous Congresses, we held the line on spending and came in \$48 billion under our goals. Does anyone seriously believe that if a Democratic Congress found itself with nearly \$150 billion in unexpected revenue it would spend \$48 billion less than its budget targets?

Teddy Roosevelt once said, "It is not the critic who counts." Similarly, the bumblebee really does not care what the experts or critics say about how he is flying. He just flies and goes about his business. He simply does not know any better.

Since we buzzed into Washington to begin our work in 1995, the stock market has doubled, interest rates have

dropped by 25 percent, and 6.4 million new jobs have been created. Above all, this year the deficit stands at \$23 billion, the lowest it has been in more than 20 years.

If the critics can continue to ignore the facts, we will just have to ignore the critics. To paraphrase the old Arab proverb, "Dogs may bark in the night, but the bumblebee brigade flies on."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. LAFALCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. TOWNS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. TOWNS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. FAZIO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SANDERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon [Ms. FURSE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. FURSE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HOYER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

TRIBUTE TO JOHN N. STURDIVANT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. RUSH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, tonight, I rise to give tribute to the late John N. Sturdivant,

President of the American Federation of Government Employees. John died last week, after a heroic battle with leukemia.

Family, friends, and co-workers said farewell to John Sturdivant this week at a memorial service. He will be deeply missed.

John Sturdivant dedicated his life to working people, especially government workers. As leader of AFGE—178,000 members representing one-third of our federal workforce—John fought tirelessly to transform the union into a dynamic advocate for the working and middle class Americans who make up the D.C. and federal workforce.

John led a vigorous national campaign for pay raises, better benefits, and working conditions. He worked hard with legislators at all levels, to encourage "locality pay." This promotes a salary system that makes sure that federal workers are paid at a comparable level with private sector workers.

John was at the forefront of a struggle that my constituents who are public service and federal workers face daily: the fight against privatization. He also fought for the use of "official time," and was a champion of the struggle to protect federal workers' retirement benefits.

We will remember John Sturdivant for many contributions. He championed the right of federal workers to have a voice in politics. Working in a bipartisan manner, John Sturdivant worked to secure reforms to the Hatch Act. These changes now allow federal workers to contribute money, attend fundraisers and do volunteer election work such as staffing phone banks.

I have worked closely during my years in public service with AFGE. It will be hard for the union to replace John. But I know that his example, courage, and leadership have made the union and the entire labor movement stronger.

I offer my deepest sympathy to John Sturdivant's companion Peggy Potter, his daughter, Michelle, his mother, Mrs. Ethiel Jessie, and his brothers.

I thank you for this chance to remember an outstanding American, an outstanding African-American labor leader, and an outstanding human being truly committed to social justice for all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. McNULTY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. McNULTY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

RECOGNIZING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FLEMINGTON JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, in just a few weeks, congregants of the Flemington Jewish Community Center in Flemington, New Jersey, and many of their friends will gather to celebrate several significant milestones in their faith and in their community. On November 23, the Flemington Jewish